similarly situated, receive each a signal favour from a disinterested and self-sacrificing benefactor ; the one cherishes gratitude all his life, and the other speedily forgets that he is under any obligation to the individual who has thus befriended him. When these two acts are submitted to the mind, it pronounces its decision instantly and authoritatively; and the one decision is expressed in the language, " This is right," and the other in the words, " This is wrong." Let metaphysicians dispute as they may, moralists may say, about the faculties or feelings exercised when the mind pronounces such judgments, there is no doubt that the mind does pronounce such sentences, and cannot be made to give forth any other. Should any one insist on our producing a reason for these judgments, we reckon it sufficient to reply, that they are primitive judgments declared by the mind on the case being submitted to it, and that we cannot produce a reason for the judgment which the mind utters in this case, any more than for that to which it comes, when, on contemplating first sounds, and then colours, it proclaims them to be different.

But other questions press themselves upon us, and demand an answer; and it is of great moment that we be able to separate the questions which have become confounded together in ethical investigation. The later writers on this subject, in our country, appear to us not to have been sufficiently careful in distinguishing the things that differ, and have at times lost themselves in a labyrinth, in consequence of their not laying out in the fabric which they have built a few leading passages, into which all the others might run.

Besides the general question above referred to, there are in reality four subjects contained in the one grand subject, and the greatest confusion of idea, and in some cases positive error, have arisen from not systematically noticing the distinction between them.

There is, FIRST, the mental process, the faculty

or feeling, by which the distinction between *vice* and virtue is observed.

There is, SECONDLY, the common quality or qualities to be found in all virtuous action.

There is, THIRDLY, the rule by which we are to determine whether an action is virtuous.

There are, FOURTHLY, the consequences which follow from virtue and vice in the feelings of the mind and the experience of society.